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REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL AND BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL AND BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION,
Washington, D. C., September 6, 1932.

SIR: I submit herewith a report of the work of the Office of Personnel and Business Administration for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1932.

Respectfully,

W. W. STOCKBERGER, *Director.*

Hon. ARTHUR M. HYDE,
Secretary of Agriculture.

INTRODUCTION

From the standpoint of administration, the fiscal year 1932, was marked by measures of economy in order to bring the expenditure program of the department into conformity with the general financial situation of the Government. At the beginning of the fiscal year the chiefs of the several bureaus and offices were requested to curtail expenses in every possible manner in order to lighten the burden upon the Treasury and reduce the size of the deficit. By administrative economies of all types, reduction in salary expenditures through the nonfilling of vacancies, the elimination of increases in compensation, reduction of expenditures for travel, both as to the amount performed and the rate of travel expenses paid, purchase of supplies and equipment, and by curtailment and postponement of activities where possible, a considerable reduction in anticipated expenditures was effected, and the following amounts, approximately, were not used and will be returned to the Treasury as outright savings from the appropriations for the ordinary activities of the department:

Bureau of Agricultural Economics.....	\$648,820	Grain Futures Administration.....	\$27,540
Bureau of Agricultural Engineering.....	43,000	Bureau of Home Economics.....	10,250
Bureau of Animal Industry.....	926,840	Office of Information.....	16,750
Bureau of Biological Survey.....	80,380	Library.....	500
Bureau of Chemistry and Soils.....	194,300	Bureau of Plant Industry.....	341,850
Collection of seed loans.....	13,760	Plant Quarantine and Control Adminis- tration.....	409,370
Bureau of Dairy Industry.....	53,800	Bureau of Public Roads.....	163,460
Bureau of Entomology.....	375,060	Office of Secretary.....	86,690
Office of Experiment Stations.....	29,130	Weather Bureau.....	356,770
Extension Service.....	98,450	Total.....	4,665,200
Food and Drug Administration.....	105,370		
Forest Service.....	680,110		

In addition to the foregoing savings from the appropriations for ordinary activities, unexpended balances amounting to approximately \$7,902,000 accrued on special appropriations for loans, roads, etc., which also will be returned to the Treasury.

The savings of \$4,665,200 effected on the appropriations for ordinary activities were in almost every case reflected in decreased appropriations for the fiscal year 1933, and while their accomplishment necessitated considerable rearrangement of expenditure plans throughout the department and created a difficult situation during 1932, at the same time the department was able to meet the situation arising in the fiscal year 1933 when reductions approximating \$10,000,000 were made in these appropriations with less disturbance to the work than otherwise would have been the case.

In addition to the administrative action taken in the department to curtail expenditures, Congress devoted considerable attention to legislation dealing with the same subject. As an outgrowth of both the executive and legislative acts, therefore, numerous problems of business and personnel administration arose, and the retrenchment plans and policies thus determined upon placed greatly added

duties on all offices in the department, both in the central administration and the several bureaus and offices. The reduction in appropriations and the passage of the economy act (Public, No. 212, 72d Cong.), approved June 30, 1932, enacted to accomplish savings in the conduct of the entire Government, placed further restrictions on departmental operation which will have a decided effect throughout the fiscal year 1933.

For the purpose of clarity, the work of the Office of Personnel and Business Administration is developed according to individual divisions, as follows:

BRANCH OF PERSONNEL

DIVISION OF APPOINTMENTS

The division of appointments continued to function along the same lines as indicated in last year's report. In view of the conservative policy adopted by the department in making appointments and filling vacancies since the last report, the records of this office reflect interesting information which may best be observed through the comparison shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1.—*Personnel activities of the Department of Agriculture, 1931 and 1932*

Year ended June 30	Employees on rolls of department			Field stations	Employees appointed	Separations from the department
	Departmental service	Field service	Total			
1931-----	5,639	22,524	28,163	1,451	10,258	7,836
1932-----	5,664	21,764	27,350	1,451	6,612	7,425

The department personnel experienced a turnover of 5.98 per cent during the year as compared with 7.95 per cent during 1931, 9.79 per cent during 1930, and 8.62 per cent during 1929.

During the year, 304 formal applications for positions were received and circulated throughout the department.

RECORD OF LEAVE

Comparison of the average number of days leave taken by the employees of the department during the calendar years 1924 to 1931, both inclusive, is shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2.—*Average number of days leave taken by employees of the Department of Agriculture, 1924-1931*

DEPARTMENTAL EMPLOYEES

Leave	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931	8 years average
Annual-----	27.0	27.3	27.2	27.0	27.0	27.0	27.0	27.2	27.1
Sick-----	7.6	7.3	7.9	7.5	7.7	7.7	6.9	7.4	7.5
Total-----	34.6	34.6	35.1	34.5	34.7	34.7	33.9	34.6	34.6

FIELD EMPLOYEES

Annual-----	12.1	12.3	12.2	12.0	12.0	12.3	12.3	12.6	12.2
Sick-----	3.0	3.0	3.2	3.0	3.3	3.1	2.8	2.8	3.0
Total-----	15.1	15.3	15.4	15.0	15.3	15.4	15.1	15.4	15.2

Employees in the field service, until June 30, 1932, were limited to 15 days annual and 15 days sick leave. By act of Congress (Public No. 212, 72d Cong.) the privilege of receiving annual leave with pay was suspended during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1933.

It is interesting to note that 26 per cent of the employees in Washington and 54 per cent of the employees in the field took no sick leave in 1931, and only 4.1 per cent of the Washington personnel and 4.1 per cent of the field used the entire allowance of annual and sick leave which could have been granted. These averages are consistent with those of the past eight years.

WORK INCIDENT TO APPOINTMENTS, TRANSFER, AND PROMOTION

Personnel changes in the department during the year, as compared with those of 1931, are given in Table 3.

TABLE 3.—*Personnel changes in the Department of Agriculture, 1931 and 1932*

	1931	1932
Certificates from registers.....	1,420	702
Reinstatement certificates.....	385	212
Certificates for change in status.....	619	194
Transfer certificates.....	289	165
Authorities for temporary appointments.....	762	462
Authorities for extensions of temporary appointments.....	432	443
Authorities for extensions of suspensions.....	11	6
Civil Service examinations requested.....	132	26

RETIREMENT RECORDS

The division of appointments has continued work on the final completion and installation of a new system of retirement records, which was begun in the fiscal year 1931, under which Civil Service Form 2806 was substituted for the old master retirement card. All applications for retirement, except disability, are now submitted to the Civil Service Commission with complete fiscal and personnel data on Form 2806. Figures showing retirements in 1931 and 1932 are given in Table 4.

TABLE 4.—*Number of employees retired, 1931 and 1932*

Year ended June 30	Annuity retirements in class—				Disability retirements in class—				Cases disposed of
	Professional	Subprofessional	Clerical, administrative, and fiscal	Custodial	Professional	Subprofessional	Clerical, administrative, and fiscal	Custodial	
1931.....	36	88	20	27	7	17	20	3	307
1932.....	22	41	13	9	8	17	8	10	378

The averages of the annuities in the various groups are as follows:

	1931	1932
Professional and scientific.....	\$1,006.77	\$1,100.77
Subprofessional.....	926.61	972.67
Clerical, administrative, and fiscal.....	907.88	981.88
Custodial.....	749.42	698.57

Of 157 employees on continuance at the close of the fiscal year only 3 were recommended for further continuance, the remaining 154 employees being separated from the service effective June 30, 1932, under the terms of the economy act. The number of employees who had been given continuances in 1931 and 1932 is shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5.—*Number of employees who received continuances after reaching retirement age, 1931 and 1932*

Year ended June 30	Extensions					
	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth
1931.....	53	29	3	1	2	1
1932.....	60	35	1	0	0	0

The proportionate number of employees reaching retirement age apparently will continue at about the same rates during the fiscal year 1933, but under the terms of the economy act it appears that almost all these employees will be recommended for retirement and very few for continuance.

DIVISION OF ORGANIZATION AND CLASSIFICATION

The division of organization and classification continued with no change in its staff since the last report. A number of important investigations were concluded by this division, which resulted in the reorganization of bureau work and a saving in money to the department. With a departmental economy program in effect this office has been particularly useful in assembling information concerning organizational and classification matters. Since the last report was issued the number of positions allocated has been substantially reduced, as will be noted in Table 6.

TABLE 6.—*Appointments and changes in status of employees of the Department of Agriculture, 1931 and 1932*

Year ended June 30	Appoint-ments to new positions	Changes in duty	Changes to vacancies	Appeals	Total
1931-----	545	430	979	110	2,064
1932-----	187	320	725	23	1,255

During the year this office drafted and had photographed 161 charts covering the various bureau activities of the department. This number does not include miscellaneous charts prepared from time to time to accompany special reports.

The scope of activities of this division continues similar to that outlined in last year's report, with the exception that a new house organ, the Administrative Bulletin, has been edited by this office. The Bulletin is a departmental publication reflecting constructive information for the use of administrative officers in Washington and in the field service.

BRANCH OF BUSINESS AND FISCAL OPERATIONS

THE DEPARTMENT BUDGET

Total appropriations made for the Department of Agriculture for all purposes, for the fiscal year 1932, amounted to \$301,552,230. Appropriations thus far made for the fiscal year 1933 amount to \$185,883,236. The total for 1933 is exclusive of \$132,000,000 provided by the emergency relief and construction act of 1932 for advances to the States for Federal-aid and for other road construction during the fiscal year 1933. The distribution of the appropriations for 1932 and 1933 is shown in Table 7. It will be noted that funds appropriated for highway construction are well in excess of 50 per cent of the total appropriations for each year.

TABLE 7.—*Distribution of Department of Agriculture appropriations for fiscal years 1932 and 1933*

[1932, final figures; 1933, as of July 1, 1932]

Activity	Fiscal year	
	1932	1933
General activities:		
Office of the Secretary.....	\$1,322,115	\$1,206,547
Office of Information.....	1,420,961	1,335,800
Library.....	110,620	106,100
Office of Experiment Stations (exclusive of payments to States).....	399,410	294,294
Extension Service (exclusive of payments to States).....	1,793,560	1,688,170
Weather Bureau.....	4,497,720	4,164,038
Bureau of Animal Industry.....	16,085,195	15,324,947
Bureau of Dairy Industry.....	796,990	717,448
Bureau of Plant Industry.....	5,839,238	4,930,874

TABLE 7.—*Distribution of Department of Agriculture appropriations for fiscal years 1932 and 1933—Continued*

Activity	Fiscal year	
	1932	1933
General activities—Continued.		
Forest Service (exclusive of forest roads, payments to States, and forest fire deficiency)	¹ \$16,960,120	¹ \$12,556,399
Bureau of Chemistry and Soils	2,177,201	2,025,080
Bureau of Entomology	2,863,740	2,471,700
Bureau of Biological Survey	2,229,170	1,756,177
Bureau of Public Roads (exclusive of Federal-aid highways)	179,940	
Bureau of Agricultural Engineering	583,840	518,690
Bureau of Agricultural Economics	7,241,136	6,649,841
Bureau of Home Economics	246,700	233,365
Bureau of Plant Quarantine	3,747,930	2,490,125
Grain Futures Administration	221,480	218,838
Food and Drug Administration	1,810,228	1,716,167
Total	70,527,294	60,404,600
Payments to States (exclusive of road funds):		
State agricultural experiment stations, for research under Hatch, Adams, and Purnell Acts (Office of Experiment Stations)	4,357,000	4,374,000
State colleges of agriculture, for extension work, under Smith-Lever, and supplemental acts (Extension Service)	8,672,936	8,728,096
Cooperative fire protection (Forest Service)	1,775,000	1,611,580
Cooperative distribution of forest planting stock (Forest Service)	95,000	79,960
Payments to States from national-forest receipts (Forest Service)	1,640,000	1,280,000
Total	16,539,936	16,073,636
Road funds:		
Federal-aid highways	175,000,000	100,000,000
Forest roads and trails, under Federal highway act	12,500,000	8,905,000
Roads and trails for States, paid from national-forest receipts	600,000	500,000
Total	188,100,000	109,405,000
Emergency relief loans:		
Loans to farmers in storm and drought-stricken areas, Southeastern States	2,000,000	-----
Agricultural credit and rehabilitation emergency relief loans (carried in Interior Department appropriation act, 1932)	20,000,000	(²)
Collection of seed loans	125,000	(³)
Total	22,125,000	-----
Special items:		
Fighting forest fires (deficiency item)	4,260,000	-----
Private claims and relief act	2,145	-----
Grand total	301,554,375	⁴ 185,883,236

¹ Includes \$1,700,000 for cooperative work.² \$10,000,000 of 1932 appropriation provided by Public Resolution 11 of Mar. 3, 1932, reappropriated and made immediately available for aid in establishing agricultural-credit corporations.³ \$500,000 of unexpended balance of appropriation provided under Public Resolution 114, approved Jan. 15, 1931, continued available until June 30, 1933.⁴ Exclusive of \$1,000,000 carried in the agriculture act for 1933 for the Century of Progress Exposition, to be administered by the Chicago World's Fair Centennial Commission.

APPROPRIATIONS FOR ROAD CONSTRUCTION UNDER THE EMERGENCY RELIEF AND CONSTRUCTION ACT OF 1932

In addition to the appropriations listed in Table 7, the emergency relief and construction act of 1932 (Public No. 302, 72d Cong.), approved July 21, 1932, provided \$132,000,000 for emergency road construction during the fiscal year 1933 under the supervision of the Department of Agriculture, as follows:

Federal-aid highways (advances to States)	\$120,000,000
National-forest highways	5,000,000
National-forest protection and administration roads, trails, and other improvements	5,000,000
Public-land highways	2,000,000
Total	132,000,000

DIVISION OF ACCOUNTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

During the year this division disbursed \$263,335,639.29, which required the examination and payment of 393,480 vouchers and pay rolls and the issue of 658,338 checks drawn on the Treasurer of the United States. As compared with the preceding fiscal year, this indicates an increase of \$19,554,597.33 in the amount disbursed, but a decrease of 69,852 vouchers and pay rolls examined and paid, and a decrease of 79,693 checks issued. The figures reported for 1931 included disbursements of \$9,799,650.96 for emergency-relief loans made to farmers in flood and drought-stricken areas administered by the Washington regional seed loan office, involving the payment of 88,983 vouchers and the issue of 89,826 checks, whereas during 1932 the number and amount of such payments were negligible. Eliminating, for purposes of comparison, these emergency-relief loan transactions from the 1931 totals, the disbursements were \$29,354,248.29 greater in 1932 than in the previous year, the number of vouchers and pay rolls increased by 19,131, and the number of checks issued increased by 10,133.

The large increase in disbursements was due almost entirely to the augmented appropriations available during 1931 for advances to States for Federal-aid highway construction.

A comparison of the number of vouchers paid and checks drawn with the number in other years is shown in Table 8.

TABLE 8.—*Number of vouchers paid and checks drawn, fiscal years 1927–1932*

Fiscal year	Vouchers paid	Checks drawn	Fiscal year	Vouchers paid	Checks drawn
1927-----	254,744	410,521	1930-----	333,059	546,145
1928-----	1 267,143	1 441,025	1931-----	2 374,349	2 648,205
1929-----	292,947	473,384	1932-----	393,480	658,338

¹ Exclusive of 215,000 vouchers paid and a like number of checks issued in connection with the campaign for control of the European corn borer.

² Exclusive of 89,000 vouchers paid and a like number of checks issued in connection with emergency drought relief and rehabilitation loans to farmers.

The disbursing clerk received from the various bureaus of the department and deposited in the Treasury to the credit of the proper appropriations or the required general fund revenue titles collections of public moneys totaling \$18,036,454.41. These collections consisted of \$16,179,634.72 in repayments to the proper appropriations of emergency-relief loans previously made to farmers in flood, storm, and drought-stricken areas, \$359,289.60 in repayments to other appropriations and funds, and \$1,497,530.09 in miscellaneous revenues accruing from sales of Government property, services rendered the public, fees for the official inspection, grading, or classification of commodities, interest on emergency-relief loans, and from other sources.

These collections involved the receipt, handling, verification, and posting of 9,781 schedules of collections (including 2,975 from the Washington regional seed loan office), comprising a very much greater number of individual remittances in the form of checks, drafts, money orders, and currency, transmitted to this office by the various bureaus of the department. In addition, 3,136 schedules of collections were received from the regional seed-loan offices at Memphis, Tenn., St. Louis, Mo., and Grand Forks, N. Dak., covering remittances deposited in the Federal reserve banks or branches at Memphis, St. Louis, and Minneapolis, to the credit of the disbursing clerk's account with the Treasurer of the United States. These also had to be verified, receipted, and posted, bringing the total to 12,917. A total of 1,571 certificates of deposit were prepared and transmitted to the Treasurer of the United States and accounted for in the manner prescribed by the General Accounting Office.

OFFICE OF ACCOUNTS (OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY)

The office of accounts is responsible for the administrative audit and accounting for funds appropriated or otherwise contributed in connection with the broad activities of the Office of the Secretary, the Extension Service, the Office of Information, Grain Futures Administration, and the Office of Experiment Stations, the last named including the insular agricultural experiment stations and disbursing agents attached thereto. The work necessarily includes continuous

study of fiscal procedure, accounting methods, and recording and reporting forms, and involves studies and analyses of results with a view to advancing the adequacy of methods and accomplishment.

The routine activities of this office are shown in Tables 9, 10, and 11.

TABLE 9.—*Audit work accomplished, 1931 and 1932*

Fiscal year	Claims audited	Purchase orders preaudited	Contracts audited	Items involved
1931.....	15,526	5,869	266	168,745
1932.....	15,115	5,277	226	1 167,481

¹ Preaudit before release of 5,503 commitments involved an aggregate of \$656,794.94.

TABLE 10.—*Record of pay-roll and miscellaneous items, 1931 and 1932*

Fiscal year	Pay rolls prepared	Pay-roll items	Letters of authorization written	Collection claims filed	Transportation requests issued	Bills of lading issued
1931.....	3,138	50,379	635	186	6,237	1,918
1932.....	3,203	51,802	507	301	5,785	1,711

TABLE 11.—*Funds under direct and indirect control of office of Secretary, 1931 and 1932*

Fiscal year	Aggregate amount	Warranted to States	Offset by States	Supplementary State funds
1931.....	\$33,800,259.97	\$13,012,936.00	\$6,192,936.00	\$8,813,102.18
1932.....	34,278,672.98	13,255,717.00	6,774,514.02	9,000,000.00

The clearance of audited documents through the bookkeeping section involved more than 600,000 entries and the preparation of 732 regular period and a large number of special financial and statistical statements.

A new model double-head electric pay-roll machine installed in August, 1931, resulted in improved quality of work and increased the average production from 1,400 to 3,200 impressions per hour. During the six months ended June 30 this machine was used to address pay envelopes for the disbursing clerk, using a stock of kraft envelopes which otherwise would have reverted to surplus stock.

The making of the field pay rolls was continued by flat-bed bookkeeping machines and aggregated 2,811 rolls containing 28,049 items, the charges to individual salary records being made concurrently with preparation of the pay rolls.

As an incident to the general operations of the office the file section received, sorted, and filed alphabetically, numerically, or topically an average of more than 500 papers daily.

In addition to the regular work the office has collaborated with the General Accounting Office and State institutions in studies of accounting and expenditure classification and the construction of standardized methods and forms.

DIVISION OF PURCHASE, SALES, AND TRAFFIC

No fundamental changes in the organization structure of the division of purchase, sales, and traffic occurred, but further significant action was taken in the direction of progressive centralization within the division of the supply activities of the department. Specific legislation in furtherance of the general plan has been secured, surveys of bureau supply activities and stocks in the District of Columbia have been made, and arrangements for assignment to the division of approximately 25,000 square feet of space in the new Federal warehouse building of the Government at Eighth and D Streets SW., have been practically completed. An account of the operations of the division and a comparison with those of the previous year are given in Table 12.

TABLE 12.—*Purchases, sales, and other activities of the division of purchase, sales, and traffic, 1931 and 1932*

		1931	1932
Bid section:			
Bid transactions.....	number	4,456	4,000
Flow of bids—			
First quarter.....	per cent.	24	24
Second quarter.....	do	17	15
Third quarter.....	do	21	20
Fourth quarter.....	do	38	41
Bureau purchase in excess of \$500 approved.....	number	150	129
Aggregate amount.....	dollars	1,200,000	163,742.53
Forest-road contracts examined prior to approval by Secretary.....	number	167	65
Aggregate amount.....	dollars	6,500,000	3,274,854.68
Definite quantity purchases of auto tires and tubes.....	do	100,000	79,400
Definite quantity purchases of other supplies.....	do	22,358	21,768.33
Value of surplus field property transferred to other departments.....	do		
^{3 4} 158,032.87		34,875.45	
Value of surplus field property received from other departments.....	do		
⁴ 51,341.32		179,018.40	
Value of District of Columbia property transferred from one bureau to another in department.....	dollars	4,750.33	3,000
Initial value of worn-out property transferred to General Supply Committee.....	dollars	25,597.33	20,782.47
Food samples destroyed.....	number	786	1,275
Traffic section:			
Freight routing furnished—			
Less than carload.....	number	5,4740	5,4,149
Carload.....	do	5,220	5,205
Rates furnished—			
Freight.....	number	5,6,824	5,6,443
Express.....	do	5,150	5,263
Passenger.....	do	5,1,285	5,1,085
Parcel post.....	do	5,100	5,75
Air.....	do	5,10	5,20
Itineraries furnished.....	do	5,98	5,134
Central supply section:			
Stock issues during year.....	dollars	205,017.92	254,261.01
Purchase orders issued to maintain stocks.....	number	6,578	{ 1,569
Purchase orders for other activities.....	do		5,174
Money value involved, all purchase orders.....	dollars	437,018.73	593,462.00
Experimental by-products sold:			
For deposit to miscellaneous receipts.....	dollars	34,026.42	29,292.60
For cooperators.....	do	6,795.28	2,734.22

¹ More than the amount given.² Estimated.³ Contained release of 1927 corn-borer equipment.⁴ 11 months' record.⁵ Approximate figure.

Comparison of a recent inventory of stock on the shelves of the central supply section fixes its value at approximately \$67,000. In addition to its activities as a general supply unit, the section also maintains complete property records for all branches of the Office of the Secretary, and similar but separate records for the crop production loan office and its seven field offices, all crop production loan office items of property being distinctly marked to distinguish them from department property. In developing its organization during the early months of 1932, the crop production loan office made no internal provision for a service of supply, but instead committed all functions of that character to the central supply section and has since relied on the section to effect its purchases and distribution of supplies. Although this imposed on the section, particularly at the outset, a great burden of additional work in the negotiation of prices, the placing of purchase orders, and the packing and shipping of huge quantities of supplies, uniformly efficient service has been rendered without additional cost other than that involved in the employment of three assistants in subordinate temporary positions.

The chief of division was designated as this department's representative on the General Supply Committee. Otherwise assignments of division personnel to represent the department on various coordinating boards, as noted in the last annual report, have continued unchanged. While all the interdepartmental boards operating under the Chief Coordinator have been active, this has been particularly true of the Federal Purchasing Board. Its members have been called on to head committee groups to negotiate consolidated purchases of commonly used supplies and equipment and thus secure the benefits of the greater discounts applicable to larger quantities. Under this procedure, the Depart-

ment of Agriculture has already contracted for the needs of the Department of Commerce, the Department of Labor, and itself for mimeograph paper for field use during the first six months of the fiscal year 1933 and is at present engaged in the development of a contract for automotive equipment for the same departments for the same period.

DIVISION OF OPERATION

New roofs were installed on the east and west wings of the main building, and four new passenger elevators and two new service elevators were installed in these same wings. The work involved in changing the electric current in the east and west wings from direct to alternating was not completed because of the delay in installing the necessary transformers. The bulk of the equipment was purchased and a considerable part of the actually necessary work performed, but the change can not be accomplished until the current source is provided.

Appropriations for the Office of the Secretary totaled \$1,449,102, and expenditures \$1,362,412.

Before the close of the fiscal year the newly completed portion of the Extensible Building was partly occupied by bureaus which had been quartered in rented buildings. This new structure, known as the South Building, contains 374,531 square feet of space, and represents the largest single building occupied by the department at this time. The completion of this building necessitated the consolidation of the cleaning forces of the various bureaus occupying space in the new structure. The importance of this centralized control of cleaning operations is appreciated when it is realized that 81,285 square feet represent areas in corridors and lobbies, and 6,318 square feet in the various toilet rooms.

GENERAL ACTIVITIES

Approximately 8,000,000 pieces of mail were handled by the department post office during the year, of which approximately 500,000 cleared through the file room. No increases were made for permanent personnel in either group, but temporary assignments were necessary for both organizations.

The maintenance section was organized in anticipation of the development of the proposed consolidated cleaning organization and is responsible for the cleaning of both the South and Administration Buildings and the performance of the necessary incidental labor work.

The addition of the South Building to the structures under the control of the department materially increased the responsibilities of the watch office.

The motor-transport service was formed during the year to handle the work involved in the operation of the motor-truck pool, the passenger-carrying vehicles, and the automobile repair shop. This work was formerly performed under the direction of the mechanical superintendent.

Representatives of the General Accounting Office made a survey of the cost-accounting methods employed in connection with the operation of the mechanical shops and the motor-transport service. As a result of these investigations a new cost-accounting system has been installed effective July 1, 1932. The cost-collection work was formerly performed in the office of the mechanical superintendent, but under the new procedure certain employees were detached and assigned to the newly organized cost-collection unit with headquarters at the mechanical-shops building, but actually under the direction of the chief accountant, Office of the Secretary.

Plans were developed for an enlarged and improved emergency-room organization to be located in the South Building. Due to the necessity for strict economy in expenditures, considerable curtailment of the original proposal was necessary. Emergency treatment was provided for a large number of employees, and the very great advantages resulting from the existence of such an organization were definitely demonstrated.

THE MECHANICAL SHOPS

The usual volume of maintenance work was performed by the shops, including the painting of the window frames of the east and west wings of the Administration Building and the painting of the power plant.

Table 13 furnishes a comparison of the work performed by the mechanical shops (including motor-transport service) during 1931 and 1932.

TABLE 13.—*Value of work performed by the mechanical shops, 1931 and 1932*

Item	1931	1932	Decrease in 1932 over 1931
Gross expenditures.....	\$367,363	\$352,184	4
Reimbursable work performed.....	227,487	212,199	7
Shop requests.....	¹ 13,861	¹ 12,365	11

¹ Number.

TELEGRAMS AND TELEPHONE CALLS

The staff actually checked and audited 143,070 telegrams, which number includes some field messages and those passing through the telegraph office maintained by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, and prepared 228 combined vouchers for the telegrams with charges aggregating \$77,516.21.

On October 1, 1931, an auxiliary telephone switchboard was installed in Temporary Building F to serve the 139 main stations and 191 extension stations installed in Buildings C and F and in the National Museum. This installation resulted in the saving of several thousand dollars and provided improved and increased operating facilities for the personnel housed in these structures.

The number of telegraph messages handled and the number of telephones in service, and comparisons with other years, are given in Table 14.

TABLE 14.—*Number of telephones in use and telegraph messages handled, 1928–1932*

Fiscal year	Telephones			Telegraph messages, incoming and out- going
	Main stations	Extension stations	Total	
1928.....	665	712	1,377	36,435
1929.....	700	762	1,462	49,913
1930.....	721	789	1,510	50,430
1931.....	807	905	1,712	61,035
1932.....	918	941	1,859	62,462

Based on traffic counts made at various times during the year, the following tabulation represents an estimate of the distributions of telephone calls made:

	Estimated number of calls made
Branch to branch.....	1,528,675
Outgoing trunks.....	199,979
Outgoing Government trunks.....	57,619
Incoming trunks.....	463,386
Incoming Government trunks.....	105,507
Outgoing tie lines.....	193,402
Incoming tie lines.....	149,494

REAL ESTATE AND HOUSING

The increased activity in connection with the Federal building program throughout the United States has produced an unusual volume of work in connection with the determination of space requirements on the part of the various bureaus and offices of the department. A number of these Federal buildings were completed during the year, and some increase in the space occupied in such buildings is shown in Table 15. Major increases in the amount of space so occupied and corresponding decreases of space in rented buildings can not, however, be expected in the immediate future.

TABLE 15.—*Space occupied by Department of Agriculture and cost of rentals, 1932*

Bureau or organization	Federal buildings		Rented buildings			
	In District of Columbia	Outside District of Columbia ¹	In District of Columbia		Outside District of Columbia	
			Area	Rental	Area	Rental
	Sq. ft.	Sq. ft.	Sq. ft.	Dollars	Sq. ft.	Dollars
Agricultural credits.....	847					
Agricultural Economics.....	223,504	61,548	5,923	1,680	165,347	140,975
Agricultural Engineering.....	11,138	6,765			15,689	4,920
Animal Industry.....	87,073	66,439			33,488	39,698
Biological Survey.....	27,299	15,288			13,473	7,710
Chemistry and Soils.....	70,129	2,186	80,988	16,000	12,384	3,900
Dairy Industry.....	24,606				9,700	2,479
Entomology.....	50,121	6,617	3,000	900	134,370	58,616
Experiment Stations.....	17,097	480				
Extension Service.....	72,496	60,752				
Farmers' seed loan.....	3,222	7,245			7,116	5,580
Food and Drug Administration.....	57,523	60,408			19,338	24,010
Forest Service.....		147,473	54,971	37,470	399,671	131,899
Grain Futures Administration.....	3,530	778			6,788	12,931
Home Economics.....	28,879					
Information.....	53,982					
Library.....	² 75,680					
Plant Industry.....	266,879	11,894			37,847	22,260
Plant Quarantine and Control Administration.....	5,111	18,293	27,930	(3)	268,462	66,582
Public Roads.....	24,420	33,374	36,909	15,000	42,186	53,323
Reconstruction Finance Corporation.....	2,440					
Secretary.....	177,281	1,498	5,872	(3)	915	882
Weather Bureau.....	47,775	100,689	2,224	1,001	78,564	118,628
Total.....	1,331,041	601,727	217,817	72,051	1,245,338	694,393

¹ Exclusive of buildings owned by Department of Agriculture.² Includes space temporarily assigned.³ Rental paid by another department.

In February, 1932, the Comptroller General of the United States rendered to the department a very important decision covering the leasing of quarters. In this decision it was held that although the contracting for such premises differed from the ordinary contract for supplies, services, etc., the department was not authorized to lease such quarters without first securing competitive bids. This requirement introduced a new element in the matter of handling lease procedure. Office of Personnel and Business Administration Circulars Nos. 196 and 201 were accordingly issued, setting forth in detail the methods to be pursued in arranging for both renewals and new leases:

